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ABSTRACT

This community living assessment tool for parents of children with deaf-blindness was developed to help parents identify the strengths and weaknesses of their child's residential program using a user-friendly instrument. Three areas of assessment are covered: physical attributes of the home, available resources for promoting capabilities, and philosophy of the service agency. Physical attributes of the home involve general appearance, atmosphere, environmental adaptations, and location. The section on resources for promoting capabilities emphasizes evaluation of staff, the planning process, the individualized program, communication strategies, evaluation procedures, and medical/support services. The philosophy of the agency is evaluated through consideration of policies, values, realization of values, residents, and parental involvement. At the beginning of the book, users prioritize each area of the assessment in rank order, and a summary sheet at the end of the book then provides an overall picture of the quality of the program. (JDD)

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An Assessment Instrument for Families: Evaluating Community-Based Residential Programs for Individuals with Deaf-Blindness

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Developed by:
Helen Keller National Center -Technical Assistance Center
Hilton/Perkins Project
Members of the National Parent Network Advisory Committee
September, 1991

EC 301 216

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AN ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT FOR FAMILIES: EVALUATING COMMUNITY-BASED RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS

Developed by:

Helen Keller National Center - Technical Assistance Center
Hilton/Perkins Project
Members of the National Parent Network Advisory Committee

(September, 1991)

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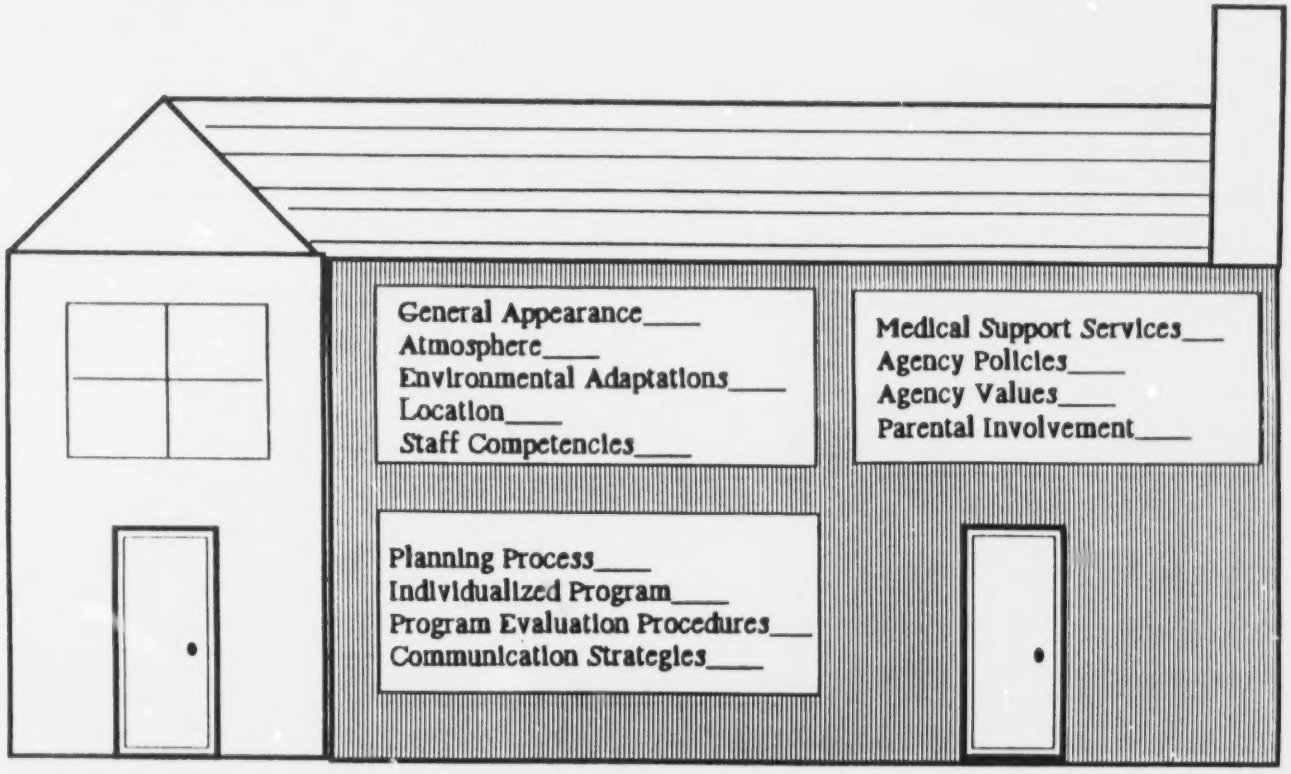
The Helen Keller Nation Center - Technical Assistance Center (HKNC-TAC) is pleased to share this community living assessment tool for parents of children with deaf-blindness. The idea for such an assessment originated with parents from the HKNC National Parent Network Advisory Committee and was pursued in collaboration with the Hilton/Perkins Project. Our goal was twofold: one, to create an instrument that would help parents identify the strengths and weaknesses of their child's residential program; and two, to ensure that the instrument was user friendly for parents.

With these goals in mind, we have created an evaluative list of considerations that parents may wish to keep in mind when selecting or monitoring their child's home. This tool offers three areas of assessment. They are: 1) Physical Attributes of the Home; 2) Available Resources for Promoting Capabilities; and 3) Philosophy of Agency.

This instrument can be used in many different ways. For example, it could be used as a checklist to organize the many questions that must be asked when discussing quality programming, or it may stimulate thought about issues not previously considered. Similarly, the frequency of application may differ; one parent may choose to use it once a year in its entirety, another may target specific sections to address monthly. The instrument is meant to be flexible and thereby capable of meeting a wide variety of needs. Foremost among these would be use of the instrument to assist parents in determining the quality of programming their child enjoys.

Kathy McNulty
Program Associate
HKNC-TAC

Please take a few minutes to think about your child's home and the following areas:



Which one of these areas is most important to you? Which one is least important? They are all areas you will be evaluating as you use this instrument. You may find it useful to rank each of these items in order of priority <u>before</u> proceeding with your assessment. [1 = most important 13 = least important]

I. PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF HOME

GENERAL APPEARANCE					
Things to consider: Maintenance of the house Upkeep of grounds Condition of furniture Attractiveness of decor Residents' preferences reflected in decor	*Comments:*				
Rating of General Appearance	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*
ATMOSPHERE					
Things to consider: Homelike atmosphere Morale of staff Sufficient space for residents and staff at peak times of day Residents' preferences displayed in bedroom and living areas Space for recreation both indoors and outside	*Comments:*				
Rating of Atmosphere	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*
ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATIONS					
Things to consider: Safe environment; obstacle-free environment Wheelchair accessibility Physical layout of house Adequate lighting; use of colors Alarm system; e.g., vibrating bed TTY Use of adaptations Available funding for adaptations	*Comments:*				
Rating of Environmental Adaptations	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

LOCATION					
Things to consider: Atmosphere of neighborhood; traffic patterns Available nearby resources; e.g., •stores •parks •restaurants •churches •temples Community recreation programs Involvement of neighbors Transportation capacity of home	*Comments:*				
Rating of Location	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*
OVERALL RATING OF PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

II. RESOURCES FOR PROMOTING CAPABILITIES

STAFF					
Things to consider: Number of staff working on weekdays/weekends Ratio of staff to residents Ratio needed by your son or daughter Turn-over rate of staff Average length of time current staff has been working in program Type of certification, if any, needed by staff Level of staff experience relative to your son/daughter's needs Frequency of training offered to staff Type of training offered to staff relative to your son/daughter's needs Training resources available to agency relative to your son/daughter's needs	*Comments:*				
Rating of Staff	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

PLANNING PROCESS					
Things to consider: Planning process is person-centered Level of client involvement Level of parent involvement Access to on-going decision making process	*Comments:*				
Rating of Planning Process	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

PROGRAM					
Things to consider: Evidence of flexibility and creativity in offering diverse activities Examples of recreation/leisure activities from the past several months Comparison of recreation/leisure activities offered with your child's preferences and abilities Access to orientation and mobility instruction Integration of orientation and mobility in most daily activities Residents' participation in the daily functions of the home; e.g, cooking, cleaning, gardening, shopping Choice-making opportunities are integrated in routines and activities Strategies used in working with behavioral challenges Behavioral programs reflect a sensitivity and respect for residents' preferences and right to make choices	*Comments:*				
Rating of Program	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES					
Things to consider: How "personal connections" are established Staff rapport with residents Examples of clients making choices and demonstrating preferences Evidence of staff awareness of the different communication styles of each resident Evidence of the staff using a variety of methods of communication; e.g., sign, pictures, objects, gestures Evidence of clients using a variety of methods of communication; e.g., sign, picture books, objects, gestures; calendar box Willingness of staff to wait for a resident to communicate - even if it takes a while Integration of communication in all activities	*Comments:*				
Rating of Communication Strategies	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

EVALUATION PROCEDURES					
Things to consider: How the program is evaluated Frequency of evaluations Who evaluates the program Existence of a quality assurance process Availability of evaluation results to parents Follow-through on recommendations Who funds the program How donations are made; how they are spent What, if any, were the conditions for this funding Written contract for the program	*Comments:*				
Rating of Evaluation Procedures	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

MEDICAL/SUPPORT SERVICES					
Things to consider Frequency and extent of medical services required by your son/daughter Availability and accessibility of medical services needed adequate dental care physical therapy psychological counseling Staff capability of providing follow-up; e.g., therapy; seizure monitoring; extensive medications How medications are monitored Agency policy on infection control Transportation to medical appointments	*Comments:*				
Rating of Medical Support Services	*[ ] Extremely satisfied*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*
OVERALL RATING OF RESOURCES FOR PROMOTING CAPABILITIES	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

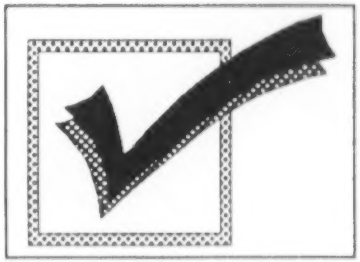
II. PHILOSOPHY

POLICIES					
Things to consider: Agency's mission statement, if written House manuals, if available Agency's statements on human rights, client dignity Agency's written goals for integration and ongoing education Agency's adherence to licensing codes Agency's policy of selecting residents Agency's policy on termination of placements	*Comments:*				
Rating of Policies	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

VALUES					
Things to consider: How agency values match with your values/hopes/dreams Examples of values: providing opportunities to learn and grow treating people with respect and dignity right to privacy; right to make choices respecting religious beliefs having fun; having friends providing a safe clean environment individual opportunities for community interaction Examples of other values:	*Comments:*				
Rating of Values	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

REALIZATION OF VALUES					
Things to consider: Examples of choices that residents' make Listing of new things learned by resident's Evidence that residents' feelings are taken seriously Diversity of activities offered Age-appropriateness of activities Examples of how individual preferences are respected Examples of how staff promotes self-esteem Open door policy to visitors and guests Respect for individual sexual needs Promotion of social relationships with: housemates; staff; neighbors; acquaintances Instances of resident's laughing; smiling or showing pleasure	*Comments:*				
Rating of Realization of Values	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*

RESIDENTS					
Things to consider What the other resident's in the home are like Number of resident's living in the home Housemate's compatibility in interests and capabilities Possibilities of peer support Residents' feelings toward their home Residents' access to their own money					
Rating of Residents	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	[ ] Fair	[ ] Poor
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT					
Things to consider: Level of parental involvement How parents are invited/encouraged to participate Communication mechanisms between staff and parents and opportunities for expressing concerns, support, questions, etc.	*Comments:*				
Rating of Parental Involvement	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*
OVERALL RATING OF LIFESTYLES	*[ ] Excellent*	*[ ] Very Good*	*[ ] Good*	*[ ] Fair*	*[ ] Poor*



IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AN OVERALL PICTURE OF THE QUALITY OF YOUR CHILD'S HOME, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY SHEET.
COMPARE SUMMARY RESULTS WITH THE AREAS YOU IDENTIFIED AS HIGH IN PRIORITY

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

I. PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF HOME	*Excellent*	*Very Good*	*Good*	*Fair*	*Poor*	*Comments:*
General Appearance						
Atmosphere						
Environmental Adaptation						
Location						
Overall Rating						
II. RESOURCES FOR PROMOTING CAPABILITIES	*Excellent*	*Very Good*	*Good*	*Fair*	*Poor*	*Comments:*
Staff						
Planning Process						
Program						
Communication Strategies						
Evaluation Procedures						
Medical/Support Services						
Overall Rating						
III. PHILOSOPHY	*Excellent*	*Very Good*	*Good*	*Fair*	*Poor*	*Comments:*
Policies						
Values						
Realization of Values						
Residents						
Parental Involvement						
Overall Rating						